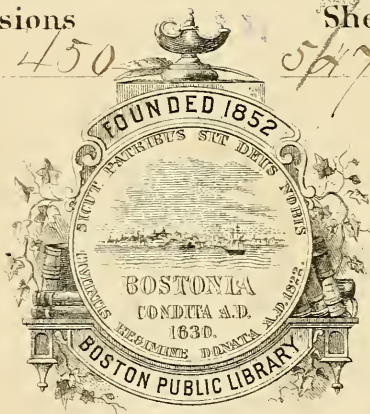


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# "LIKE UNTO ME;"

OR,

## THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN MOSES AND CHRIST.

*A WORKING-MAN'S VIEWS OF THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE PEOPLE*

BY EDWARD H. ROGERS, CHELSEA, MASS.

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1877.

THE leading ideas of the following essay have found repeated expression in a lay sermon; and their reception has been so favorable as to call for publication. The themes which are treated are of such a nature as to require a preliminary statement.

The poor of this country, and of the civilized world, are gathering in cities. In Massachusetts, twenty-eight cities and large towns gained in population in twenty years, from 1840 to 1860, one hundred and forty-five per cent; the rest of the State gained thirty-two per cent. During the same period fifty-nine cities in the United States gained one hundred and ninety-eight per cent; the rest of the country seventy-five per cent.

These tendencies of the people are partly brought about by their unprotected condition as laborers. Gregarious social and religious impulses are also operative among many of them, subordinate however to their economic exposures. They seek the cities to avoid the long days, low wages, and short labor-seasons of the country. The workman or laborer living in a compact population is not under the necessity of being away from his home over night, as is often the case with those who live in the thinly settled localities of the country; and, having a greater range of employers and employments to choose from, he does not feel so painfully the exposures to loss of time, low wages, and oppressive treatment. These influences are the same in their moral character as those which drew the masses together in walled towns and cities during the Middle Ages. Then, persons and property were exposed to military license, now, it is the labor of the people which is denied the protection of equitable law.

But, while they gain a partial benefit in these

respects, the change which is taking place from the country to the city is injurious to them in many ways, one of the most prominent of which is the very much greater cost of a home in the cities than in the country. It is in consequence of this, that there are also more people in one house. The better and the poorer classes of tenement houses are increasing faster than single residences. There were nine more voters to every hundred houses in Massachusetts in 1868, than there were in 1861. This is the same as to say that there were at least twenty-five or thirty more people in every hundred houses. The Massachusetts Bureau of Labor, in its report for 1876, gives extended statements covering the material conditions in the above respects of 55,515 male wage *employés*, being the number which made reliable returns, during the extraordinary census of the preceding year, concerning owning or hiring the houses in which they were living. Of this number, twenty-three per cent. owned their residence; forty-four and a half per cent. of these, however, were encumbered with mortgages, leaving only about twelve per cent. of the whole number who made returns, in the full possession of a home. Of these freeholders, the same returns show that Barnstable County, which has no city, has thirty-nine per cent. of house-owners, while Suffolk County, which is almost entirely urban, has only eleven per cent. of its wage population living in their own homes. The proportion of mortgaged houses in Suffolk County is fifty-three per cent., that in Barnstable being twenty-four per cent. The average mortgage in Suffolk County is \$1,613; in Barnstable, it is \$387.

No rhetoric can exaggerate the importance to individual character, or national life, of the permanent ownership and occupation of a home;

and, as we are about to discuss the religious aspects of the figures which have been given, we call attention to the fact that the protection of the home forms a prominent aspect of divine revelation, which binds the old and the new dispensations together in one of its most cheering prophecies, as follows: "Every man shall sit under his own vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make him afraid." (Micah iv. 4.)

This is a refined way of saying, not only that the time is coming when every man will own his own home, but also that he will be in no danger of losing it. The question is often asked, whether human society is improving. In some very important respects we think it is, in others, not; for the figures which have been given demonstrate anti-millennial tendencies, and, if asked to point out social defects, we should say that the heaviest burdens which we bear arise from the *inequitable distribution of labor and its reward*. If it be true that several hundred thousands of the most industrious and intelligent laborers in the world, located in a State pre-eminent for the religious and educational privileges she accords to all her citizens, are rapidly losing their hold upon the ownership of a home, as is proved not only by our figures, but by their drift into the cities where ownership is nearly impossible, it ought to lead to candid and prayerful inquiry why the existing forms of Christianity are not more effective in removing those material evils which reveal themselves in such deplorable results. The divine blessing, therefore, is hereby humbly solicited, both upon the writer and the reader, as some aspects of revelation hitherto obscured, but which bear directly upon these obvious deficiencies of human society, are brought under notice.

The book of Deuteronomy contains, in the fifteenth verse of the eighteenth chapter, the following prophecy of Moses, a prediction which is re-affirmed as a divine promise in the eighteenth verse of the same chapter:—

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."

The principal interest of the remarks which follow will turn upon the words, "*like unto me.*" They will show that the conception of Christ, which is held in the Protestant Churches, is partial in its nature, and is therefore inadequate, inasmuch as it omits or fails to give due weight to certain strongly marked peculiarities of Moses, which were equally prominent in Christ.

Among the grander characteristics of this great leader, his reliance upon a religious organization, as the chief source of security for society, is conspicuous. Under divine leadings he established a pure theocracy, the invisible Jehovah

being recognized as its sovereign. The people were to be neither mere subjects nor citizens, but "a kingdom of priests" (Ex. xix. 6), a very appropriate name, as they were, by the essential character of their laws, devoted to the service of each other and of God. The civil features of the Hebrew polity are so far revealed as to make it evident that they foreshadowed the conditions of modern political freedom; yet they were so wisely adjusted to theocratic control that they appear to have been a help, rather than a hindrance, to the divine plan to impart a religious character to the nation.

Moses foresaw, however, that the people would ultimately prefer a visible king. In view of this, he limited them to the acceptance of the one whom the Lord their God should choose, and straitly enjoined obedience to the law of God upon him, his whole course proving that he tolerated, rather than sanctioned, the secular control of the people.

#### CHRIST AS THE THEOCRATIC KING.

The language and conduct of Christ, on various occasions, is in perfect harmony with that of Moses on the question of the government of the chosen people. He avowed his intention to perfect the Mosaic code. "Think not," he said, "that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. . . . Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. . . . For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. v. 17-20.) These words from him could have meant nothing less than the restoration of the theocracy, which was the essential and controlling element of Mosaism, with himself as its king. Moses was the vicegerent of God, and the same position of right belongs to Christ.

Among the questions which have recently engaged the interest of Christian scholars, none are of greater importance than those which centre around the preaching of the heavenly kingdom by Christ. We shall not attempt to treat the higher aspects of this theme at length. The most thorough culture and the deepest spiritual insight are required for its exposition. Its material relations will claim attention at a further stage of this discussion; meanwhile, and as bearing quite directly on the nature and extent of the kingly claims of Christ, an incident of his ministry, which has been much misunderstood, will be set in its true relations. During the proclamation of the heavenly kingdom, which took place at the close of Christ's mission, and in im-



mediate connection with the miracle at Nain, which, with other demonstrations of his divine authority, had so thoroughly impressed the people that they rejoiced greatly at all the glorious things which he did, a man seems to have intrusively addressed him with the request, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" (Luke xii. 13, 14.) This occurrence is more often quoted than any other, to prove that Christ claimed no authority over secular affairs: that it has no such meaning, can, we think, be clearly shown.

In the first place, Jesus never made a claim to the exercise of the judicial function while upon the earth, nor is the title of judge ever ascribed to him by either prophet or apostle, in any sense which would have justified him in the performance of its duties at this time. He himself says, in defining his relation to men during his ministry, "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." (John xii. 47.)

These weighty reasons lead me to conclude that the man was rebuked, not because he brought a property question to Christ, but because he came to him as a judge, instead of a king. The presence of the Romans prevented the open avowal of his kingly office by Christ, so that it was all the more important that his conduct should in all respects indicate the comprehensive nature of his authority.

Two historic incidents suggest themselves, as illustrating the peculiarities of the Saviour's situation at the time. Suppose that Charles the Second, when he entered London as king, or Abraham Lincoln, when he visited Richmond at the close of our war as president, had been disrespectfully addressed by the title appropriate to some minor official function to which neither of them made any claim, and assent to which would have been an absurd renunciation of their title to supreme authority, would they not have answered as Christ did, with an indignant rebuke at the affront offered to them.

Now, if Christ was entitled to kingly authority, was his power confined to the individual experience, shut in within the narrow bounds of human consciousness, and limited by such conditions to spiritual affairs? We think not. He would have borne but a faint resemblance to Moses if this had been the case. We do not believe that the uneducated masses of the Hebrew people would have been moved as they were by a purely spiritual message, even though supported by miracles.

But a little over a century before the great Rabbi Hillel had seen fit to abrogate the Law

and the Prophets by permitting the judges to enforce the claims of creditors, irrespective of the times set forth by the law as times wherein debts could not be recovered. Would not a people whose fundamental law familiarized them with ideas of equity in pecuniary affairs, and who were aware that their rights had thus been taken from them, have caught eagerly at Christ's words concerning the "least commandments," and understood perfectly his rebuke of the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, a righteousness which made the lesser commandments of the law void through the influence of rabbinical tradition.

The people were undoubtedly mistaken in their idea that Christ intended to use force, and they must have been much excited by his miracles; but they were right in their main idea, that the Messiah came with credentials which constituted him a veritable earthly king. The appeal at this point is to the facts, — they are of amazing significance and scope.

Christ was the Son of God, and the son of David; and in both capacities inherited the throne. His authority, as a lineal descendant of David, was almost exclusively secular. The people welcomed him as a secular king in the words, "Hosanna to the son of David," and "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David;" and, furthermore, Christ expressly refused to silence them, but by a plain implication of language accepted their ascription of royal honor, following it up with the triumphal entrance to the temple, the palace of his Father, and his own appropriate residence as his vicegerent, and then verifying his right to the exercise of secular, as well as spiritual authority, by the expulsion of the traders and money-changers.

For a conclusive refutation of the common view of Christ's statements that "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke xvii. 21), and that "my kingdom is not of this world" (John xviii. 36), the inquiring reader is referred to "The Kingdom of Heaven," by Rev. Jesse H. Jones.

#### THE IDENTITY OF CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.

Desiring, as we have stated, to ascertain, if possible, the causes of our social evils, we remark here, that it is not a mere personal or casual matter that Christ should resemble Moses in his reliance on religious institutions for prosperity in temporal affairs, but that, if this was true of him, then his church must copy his example, or suffer the consequences. That the Christ of the modern Church has little or no identity in some important traits of character with Moses, and still less with the majestic being who dwelt in Palestine, will, we trust, be apparent as we proceed.

In the selection of scriptural authorities, proving that Christ associated his church with him in

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to consult deferentially, before entering fully upon his ministry, the apostle whose authority over the Hebrews was at least as well defined as his own commission in another direction.

"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother." (Gal. i. 18, 19.)

Finally, we have a remarkable testimony from the lips of the Lord himself, that hell from beneath was moved with envious wrath toward Peter, and that he was specially borne up and sustained by the prayers of his Master on account of his official position: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke xxii. 31, 32.)

The manner in which the personality of Peter is connected with the revelation which Christ makes concerning the nature and authority of his Church has seemed to require these explanations; and, having given them, the words of Christ already quoted present themselves in the following form. We submit this interpretation to the reader's judgment, and ask in doing so whether the first step is not taken in demonstrating that the authority of the church is not, as is commonly supposed among Protestants, confined to spiritual affairs, but that the same humane interest in the earthly welfare of his followers which Moses exercised, was incorporated by Christ into the new form which the old faith was taking.

As the leader of the new assembly of the saints, I have given you a name which is emblematical of the enduring foundations of the church which you and your associates are to propagate. It is eternal. Death itself will not overwhelm it. It will survive the grave; and the forces of evil which exist in Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will also intrust to you the power to establish the kingdom of heaven in the earth, and to this end the possession of temporal as well as spiritual authority is given you; and inasmuch as your power is in its nature unselfish, like that which prevails above, and dependent on the consent and affection of those over whom it is exercised, all that you do on earth will be sanctioned in heaven.

#### THE STATER IN THE FISH'S MOUTH.

The next Scripture statement, which is available for the purpose of ascertaining how far Christ resembled Moses, is to be found in the seventeenth chapter of Matthew.

24. And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute.

25. He saith, Yes. And when he was come

into the house Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26. Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

The "tribute" here alluded to was a voluntary annual tax of a half shekel paid by Jews of twenty years old and upward towards the support of the temple at Jerusalem. Peter, knowing that it was the custom of his Master to fulfil all righteousness, took it for granted that he would approve his course in consenting to pay it. Under ordinary circumstances his conduct would have been worthy of approval; but at this time Christ abruptly called him to account, and prevented his further action for the following reasons.

Peter, as we have seen, was the first, when the twelve were appealed to by Christ, to discern and acknowledge him as the Messiah. We have noticed, also, certain very remarkable relations into which Christ entered with him. It was his intention now to confirm Peter in the conviction that his authority was absolute and comprehensive, and that it included the control of the material universe in the interests of his church. It was possible for the apostle to have overlooked or underrated the importance of the secular part of the influence of the church, as set forth in the former interview; and so now he was to have a special revelation of that side of the claims of the Messiah. By an allusion to the custom of exempting the children of earthly kings from taxation, Christ unmistakably asserted his kingly claims as the Son of God. He then proceeded to demonstrate that he was not only the son of the King, but that he was also in possession of unbounded power over earthly things, by an astonishing development of his knowledge of, and control over, the hidden wealth of the sea; and, what is of more importance still, by an extraordinary act of condescension he associates Peter with him in the advantages resulting from this power, in the words, "That take, and give unto them for *me* and *thee*." It will be noticed that the Master paid Peter's tribute as well as his own. With what possible propriety could so humble a man have been associated in this manner with one so exalted, unless we accept the theory of his representative relation to the universal church? This will account, also, for the use of the plural in the expression, "Lest *we* should offend them," a lesson which was not lost upon his followers, the fact being, as is well known, that the early church acted in the same



spirit, and avoided, as far as possible, giving offence in respect to the temple service. *The central principle involved in this miracle lies in the fact that Christ included his church, as represented by himself, and Peter, with him, in the exercise of his kingly power over external nature, and in the enjoyment of its advantages.*

Most of the recent commentators have assumed that this occurrence was an assertion on the part of Christ of his divinity, coupled with a lesson to be drawn from his example as to the duty of his followers to support the institutions of religion. Both of these conclusions are just, but they are subordinate to the other and higher one which is here claimed for it. Surely there was no special need that Peter, who but a short time before had enthusiastically acknowledged his Master's divinity, should now, in this abrupt and isolated manner, be reminded of it merely as an abstract truth in its spiritual relations; and as to the second lesson — Christ's example in sustaining public worship — there seems also to be no special force to it, as the performance of a miracle, without personal self-denial on the part of the Saviour, has no parallelism in the usual circumstances of Christian worshippers, who must, for the most part, meet their pecuniary obligations for the support of the gospel under circumstances of sacrifice.

But if we take into account that the public proclamation of Christ's kingship over material things was a matter of great difficulty and danger, that it had already — as we shall show — been contemptuously rejected, although preached by the Master himself and by two commissions organized by him, then we have a sufficient reason why he should quietly and privately have addressed this miracle to Peter alone.

Another aspect of this transaction is sufficiently significant to demand allusion. Though justly ranked among the miracles of Christ, it was not a miracle in the same sense that the sublime deeds at Nain and Bethany were. Taken by themselves, each one of its details was natural. The presence of a coin in the mouth of a fish, though unusual, does not imply the supernatural. The miraculous part of the proceeding lay in the combination of all the elements involved, and in their subordination to the authority of Christ in a manner entirely superhuman. The earth, the air, and the sea united with the willing and obedient Peter in rendering service to Christ in sustaining the outward ministrations of his temple. Nor do we strain the analogy in affirming that the inventive power of the world was also represented, in the simple appliances of the apostle's vocation as a fisherman.

It is worthy of note, in reference to a deeper meaning than has been supposed to attach to this incident, that nothing is said by which we

can infer that Peter understood it *at the time of its occurrence*. Jesus told him afterwards, in the midst of the symbolism of washing the feet of the disciples, — an act by which, perhaps more than any other of his ministry, he set forth his lordship over the labor relations of life, — "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." When the light came to Peter's mind as to the true meaning of the washing, it must, also, have revealed to him the character of the miracle of the stater in the fish's mouth.

The authorities already considered seem to establish Christ's views as identical with those of Moses, so far, at least, as to demonstrate that his institutions, like those preceding them, were to take the double form which would enable them to supply all the needs of a race of beings passing through earthly to heavenly conditions. His authority has been considered in its relation to those who voluntarily enroll themselves as the members of his church; but further statements are needed in order to explain, in part at least, his relation to the merely secular natural governments of the world. The twenty-second chapter of Matthew furnishes us with an account which is sufficiently definite to indicate that he recognized civil authority as a power to be obeyed within certain limits; but inasmuch as this is the only allusion to the subject which the Gospels contain, and as this was forced upon him, it sustains our position that he did not intend that his followers should depend on the State in their efforts to save men.

#### THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE PHARISEES AND HERODIANS.

15. Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

16. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?

18. But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19. Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.

20. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

21. They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things which are God's.

Moses had ordained that the people should not choose a foreigner for their king. This law had no reference to the present situation, as they had not chosen the Roman emperor, but had been conquered by him; yet, upon the flimsy pretext of disobedience to it, they sought to "entangle" him. In his answer, Christ completely repulsed

his adversaries, so that they were unable to reply to him; yet his language only brings out the superficial aspects of the question which is involved,—the relation of the Church to the State. The presence of Roman coin was the proof of Roman authority over the country; the possession of authority carries with it the right to tax; a patriotic Hindoo of the present day, detesting British rule over his country, might use the same words that Christ did, to any party that should attempt in a similar manner to implicate him in rebellion; the real grandeur and wisdom of the reply of Christ requires a paraphrase which shall take in the whole truth, as follows:—

Your fathers chose a secular king in express opposition to the divine intentions, as revealed through Moses and the prophet Samuel. This choice changed the whole character and tendency of your government, and resulted finally in subjection to the Romans. You have come deceitfully and wickedly to entrap me into a public statement of the truth, which I have often privately explained to my disciples, that God is the rightful king of this country, and that I have been trying to re-establish his authority; and you intend, if I should do what you desire, to expose me to death at the hands of the Romans for sedition.

This interpretation leaves us free to believe that God will redeem his promise to Abraham, to give to him, and his seed, the land of Canaan for an *everlasting* inheritance, conditioned upon their acceptance of the gospel; but that meanwhile they must submit, even in the promised land, to the secular control which their disobedience has brought upon them. In its relation to the State, it concedes, so far as it goes, which, as we have said, is not far, the *right* of the civil power to levy taxes on all classes of its citizens. There can, however, be no doubt upon the question as to whether Christ would have authorized the taxation of church property. We may feel assured that he would not have taxed any kind of property. He heralded the “law” as the organic source of the principles upon which he proposed to build the heavenly kingdom in the earth. The assessments of the law were laid on income; and, when the Church fills out the measure of its power over material affairs, the weighty influence of its example, in collecting its own offerings, will lead the State to adopt the same course as it has already done in the conspicuous instance of copying universal suffrage from ecclesiastical precedents.

The fact that this intensely interesting and important question is being fought on a false issue, will become increasingly apparent as the agricultural communities demand relief from the property tax, and insist on the payment of their own imposts in kind, and in proportion to their

crop. This measure would enable the State to extend its system of bonded warehouses, by which it cares for the interest of the merchant, to the farmers, by taking breadstuffs at the labor cost of production measured by time. The *market price* could thus be controlled by means of a currency based on the same terms of labor cost, and redeemable in commodities, and service in transportation, etc.

#### MOSES, AND THE MATERIAL INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE.

Recurring again to one of the leading characteristics of Moses, his care for the material interests of the common people will demand our attention. His legislation shielded the masses in their relation to land, time, and price, both of money, merchandise, and also of labor. It was an embodiment of the principles of mutual service, as opposed to the selfishness of our modern industrial and commercial customs. He prohibited the perpetual alienation of land: it was not to be sold forever (Lev. xxv. 23), but was to descend from parents to children, so that permanent homes might rest upon it, families be reared, and a stable character imparted to the community.

He lifted the primal curse off from the shoulders of labor, in his laws concerning time. Three great feasts, those of the passover, harvest, and tabernacles, called the people every year to Shiloh, or Gibeon, and finally to Jerusalem. Each of these feasts, with the time used in the journeys, occupied about two weeks; and there were other lesser observances of the same nature. In addition to these, the sabbath, and every seventh and every fiftieth year, were sacred, to the extent of release from all but absolutely necessary labor.

The excessive devotion of time to material avocations is a most efficient cause of the low state of religion; and, in order to show how offensive our present customs are in this respect, we call the attention of Christian believers to the law of leisure, as announced by the Master in the last ten verses of the sixth chapter of Matthew, beginning with the expression, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” From this text Christ expands the ideas of Moses concerning time, eulogizing the non-laborious lilies of the field, and fowls of the air, and emphasizing their conduct as worthy of imitation by those who were willing to join him in establishing the kingdom of God.

#### USURY PROHIBITED.

But the most interesting and important feature of the Mosaic code lies in its prohibition of usury; and, inasmuch as the three points of profit,—or “increase,” which was also interdicted,—dividends, and rent are all more or less in-



volved in its practical operation, it calls for special thought. This will be developed in objective form.

All intelligent residents of Massachusetts, who were born in the State, and have reached the period of middle life, will recollect how the resources of the community were strained to build the Western Railroad, running from Worcester to Albany. For ten years it was the one principal object of its kind, which was kept before the people, mainly through the press. They were appealed to, both in their private and in their public life, as it developed at the State House. Nor were these efforts relaxed in the least until the six or eight million dollars needed were obtained. The road was built. It has been a great benefit to the people of the State, and for many years has paid large dividends to its stockholders. Yet it has not been a success. It has not fulfilled the expectations of its projectors, as is proved by the most determined and persevering opposition to it of a large class of the most intelligent and disinterested men in the State. What is the reason? We apprehend it to be as follows: *The road is managed in direct opposition to the divine law which should control property. It is usurious.* It ministers to *gain*, rather than to *service*. Its directors are intelligently charged with the deliberate destruction of private business enterprises, which depend upon its facilities, rather than reduce their dividends by low fares and freights. It is understood that the more candid among them admit the fact. In the present state of public opinion and conscience, no remedy can be applied. If the proposal is made to purchase the road, and run it, under State control, at cost, the objection immediately presents itself that the speculation and mismanagement of public officials might possibly more than equal the burdens already borne. Does not this state of society appeal directly to the Church? Who is responsible, if she is not? "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" In the simpler forms of business life which formerly prevailed, there was a religious conscience respecting money. These scruples have been, to a large extent, suppressed, with results which have extended to the ordinary obligations of morality, and have shaken the foundations of society.

During the first thirty years of this century, there were but two public works in the country, the Erie and the Middlesex Canals. It is understood that they were both conducted with honesty at least, if not with the full devotion to the common good of the whole community which the property question really demands. May we not hope that the interest in material affairs which is now aroused will not cease, until, from the pulpit and in the sabbath school, the laws

of God concerning property are fearlessly and faithfully taught, and, as far as possible, put in practice in the dealings of Christians with each other.

The real offensiveness of usury is not apparent, without a closer scrutiny than that of the ordinary observer. Under such an examination, it will appear to all intents to be true of this road, that invisible engineers, conductors, and brakemen—in the form of stockholders—ride on every train, and throng the benches of its workshops; their dividends must be paid, even though the real laborers starve. No element of sacrifice or service appears upon their clothing or their persons, yet their reward for years has been two or three times as much as would have been reckoned equitable under the most liberal construction of the rights of capitalists as measured by real, or ideal, costs. These conditions, impressive as they are, do not expose the most terrible aspects of usury. It repeats itself, and devours with deadly avarice as long as any substance remains for it to absorb. The road in question has 'paid for itself,' as the phrase is, two or three times in succession. But this is a false statement; the road never pays a single cent; those who ride, and those who use it for freight, pay every mill of the millions which are disbursed as dividends, besides paying the running costs, and the depreciation from use. Under this wretched fallacy, that the road pays for itself, *the startling fact lies concealed that the public every ten or twelve years repeats its original costly contribution to build the road, without the least equitable reason for so doing.* It keeps building, over and over again, so far as putting out money is concerned, and under influences the reverse in point of economy from those which were active in the original construction. Then the question was an open one, freely discussed in every direction, and the governing classes were active in confining cost to its lowest limit. Now it is closed to all but the most fearless advocates of truth, while stock-dividends and deceptive construction-accounts gorge to satiety the greedy maw of gain.

The illustration of the deadly nature of usury which has been given applies to affairs of a public character, but its influence within the domestic sphere is no less injurious. To prove this, it is necessary to assume the existence of a laundry of the largest size, complete in its appointments, and competent, if worked to its full capacity, of doing an immense business. Its cost will not perhaps have been less than fifty thousand dollars, and its administration, in point of efficiency, courtesy to customers, and kindness to *employees*, shall be as perfect as "business principles" admit of; yet, with the exception of benefiting a few of the wealthiest families in its neighborhood, such a laundry might as well be in the

middle of the Desert of Sahara as in a thickly settled community.

It will be found to be the fact, wherever such an institution exists, that its prices and usages are of such a character as to invite and accommodate only those whose pursuits are gainful, and to repel all the common class of householders whose incomes do not come from commercial sources. Its patronage will be confined to the large manufacturers of clothing, who wish to put their goods into the best shape to sell, the large hotels, and boarding-houses, and passenger ships, together, as we have said, with a few wealthy families. The reasons are the same as those which have made the Albany road, in some important respects, a burden, instead of a benefit, to the State.

The real cost of the laundry is confined to its depreciation from use, age, weather, etc., to which must be added taxes, insurance, and the equitable reward for their labor of its proprietor and his operatives; but the state of public opinion allows an additional charge for the *use* of the money invested in the concern. This, as we have seen in the analysis which has been given of the railroad, operates just as it does there to change for the worse the whole business. It should be observed here that the non-servicable character of the railroad, or the laundry, is not due primarily to the difference of a small percentage of price, either as dividend or as freight, but to the existence, in the minds of the stockholders or owners, of the desire for unlimited returns for property as such, and that in money, without any reference to the effect upon the public good; and, on the other hand, the small annual percentage, which would be relinquished in running the road or the laundry at cost, does not of itself give any adequate view of the benefits which would result if the people would abandon the present idea that money is to be regarded as a source of income through usury, or gain, and learn to look upon it as a means of obtaining and doing good, retaining its control themselves, and doing their own personal and household work with it, instead of putting it at interest to be used by capitalists, and invested only in those forms which promise the largest returns in mercantile terms. It may appear, upon a full consideration, that larger amounts of money, even, may be attainable, if this course should be generally adopted.

The laundry has been sketched from the business standpoint: we will now draw an outline of it, as conducted on the principles that Moses and Christ would urge if they were consulted. In doing this, we will add the culinary feature, which would extend its business over the whole week, and expand the enterprise to the full proportions of co-operative housekeeping. In this

case, five hundred householders in moderate circumstances, instead of loaning their money at interest, will give a hundred dollars each to make the fifty thousand dollars which are required, and will establish a laundry which will at once, and as long as it lasts, relieve them of the greater part of the curse of housework, besides dispensing with menialism in their families. If they do as wisely and well as their Bibles enjoin them, they will only expect, at the most, such return for their money as will keep the amount invested good; that is, enough to replace the depreciation of buildings and machinery, and pay for insurance. It is evident that such a body of householders have it in their power to abolish usury in this enterprise, and, what is of far greater importance than the mere money aspect of the abolition of usury, to obey the scriptural injunction to "bear one another's burdens" in a manner that is impossible under commercial ideas of price for money. We cannot emphasize too strongly the point we have attempted to make, that dividends in excess of cost deprive all institutions of this kind of their co-operative character. If they are demanded, the managers must meet the call upon them by lowering the pay of their *employees*, inviting thus frequent changes and inefficient service, and also by such a course with reference to customers as ultimately to repel all small householders, and finally to give the enterprise its existing character,—that of a small business for a large return in money, instead of a large business devoted to mutual personal service.

If our view of the power committed to the church be the true one, it is within the sphere of Christian effort for individuals in any or all of the churches in a given locality to unite for such a purpose as we have proposed, and, carrying the spirit of their organizations, that of devotion and self-denial, into the enterprise, change for the better all the domestic and public affairs of the place, through the leisure and consequent culture which would ensue. May we not put our appeal more strongly still to the Christian women, who will be impressed with these remarks? If it is within your sphere, is it not also your duty to band yourselves together for the holy purpose of elevating and refining the home, by relieving it, as much as is possible, from all depressing influences? Does not the Master repeat in all our dwellings his admonition to Martha? Many women have felt this; but few or none of them have realized that the household bondage, which makes woman a slave to work that is never done, is due to the fact that under our pagan labor-system we not only despise the law of Moses, but lay ourselves liable to the still heavier condemnation of treading under foot the Son of God. (Heb. x. 28, 29.)



## THE PREACHING OF THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM.

The announcement of the nearness of the heavenly kingdom, and the sending of the twelve and the seventy to spread the glad tidings, furnishes, as has already appeared, sufficient proof of an identity of opinion and feeling between Moses and Christ, as to their reliance upon religious, rather than secular, authority in the control of society. The peculiar nature of this errand, as a specific effort to re-establish the theocracy, with the government on the shoulders of Christ as the viceregent of God, and also its material or earthly character, appears very clearly in the tenth chapter of Matthew, and the ninth and tenth chapters of Luke, as given in part below. The absence of any attempt at organization has been argued as disproving the claims which are here made for Christ; but if we bear in mind that the Jews were intensely social, and tended, by all the force of their existing institutions, to united action of the kind required, the objection will not appear of much account.

Matt. x. 5. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

9. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses.

10. Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

11. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. . . .

16. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

"After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also" (Luke x. 1), sending them out with substantially the same commands, adding, however, that they were not to "salute any man by the way," and "to go not from house to house." It further appears from the twenty-third verse of the tenth chapter of Matthew, in connection with verses one and twenty of chapter eleven, that Christ followed his disciples on the same errand, but without the results he had a right to expect. "For verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. . . . And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. . . . Then began he to upbraid the cities

wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not."

In order to understand these occurrences, it should be remembered that Christ had already magnified the Mosaic law in the Sermon on the Mount, and placed it in its true relations as the organic principle controlling the material development of the heavenly kingdom. His instructions to his disciples are in harmony with his previously expressed intentions. They were to avoid the Gentile and Samaritan communities, because they had had no training in the peculiar forms of practical righteousness which were enjoined by Moses. The Jews had been taught—theoretically at least—to honor the law, and to some extent had been prepared, as no other nation had, for its expansion into the fulness of the divine ideal. The instructions next imparted relate entirely to deliverance from material evils. A single allusion by Mark to repentance excepted, there is not a word about baptism, regeneration, or any other rite or experience which we have been accustomed to associate with the incoming of the kingdom of heaven, as we have been taught to regard it. They were authorized to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and to cast out devils—this may appear to have been an exception, but if we consider the terrible physical results of diabolic possession in those times, it will be seen that the exception is more apparent than real. They were to make no provision for their own support, as the Master was aware that the gratitude of the people for the exercise of the power which he committed to them would amply compensate for the omission of ordinary care for themselves.

But their aims were altogether higher than would appear from their conduct among the common people. When they entered a city they were to inquire "who in it was worthy;" that is, who has the most of the revival or reform spirit which is necessary in order to apply the principles and spirit of the ancient laws to the regeneration of society: they were to abide with these public-spirited men, and with them concert such measures as might appear most feasible in forwarding the Master's views. The expression with which Christ closes his injunctions is worthy of the closest study. It implies that they would be brought in contact with ferocious enemies,—"wolves,"—in whose presence they were to act with the wisdom—caution—of serpents, and the gentleness of doves. These qualities are needed in pressing the same question now. He meant substantially this: The selfish and the sensual will oppose you with deadly hatred; but you are not to return evil for evil. If enmity is excited, you are to flee from it. Your errand is of such a delicate and complex nature that opposition and contention is fatal to its success. All that we

can do at present is to give the people an invitation and an opportunity to establish righteousness.

The public as well as the material nature of the heavenly kingdom, as related to communities in their organized capacities, is plainly shown in the instructions to "wipe off the dust of the cities which rejected them," to "salute no man by the way," and to "go not from house to house," peculiarities which would dispense with many of the ordinary activities of religion, such as pastoral visits, tract-distribution, and the like; thus evidently isolating these proceedings from the general course of Christ's conduct in addressing individuals, and in authorizing his apostles, just before the ascension, to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

All the gospel statements which bear upon material affairs demonstrate the existence of a broad foundation in the character, conduct, and teachings of Christ, which his followers have not in any effective sense built upon. Such expressions as the following prove not so much the individual inconsistency of the wealthy professors of the present day, as they do the utter ignorance of the modern church as to the true nature of the claims of Christ upon his followers:—

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." "But woe unto you that are rich! for you have received your consolation."

These are impracticable commands and absurd denunciations to issue upon the narrow base of Protestant individualism, accompanied by the denial of Christ's temporal authority. Unless some broader ground than the present theory of the church as a pure spirituality can be found to facilitate and render obedience possible, they might as well be expunged from the Gospels. It is because Christ was like Moses, that they are found in the Word of God, waiting the time when they may be made practical by the united action of the Church. A faithful soldier, knowing that his material interests are secured by his communal relation to his regiment, will freely lend, even at some cost to himself, his bread and coffee to his destitute comrade, "hoping for nothing again," taking no thought, saying, "What shall I eat?" or, "What shall I drink?" because he knows that the military society which he serves will care for him at the next issue of its commissary; but, as a

private citizen, under a selfishly individualized labor-system, it would be utter folly for him to pursue such a course.

#### THE PARABLES OF THE TEN POUNDS AND THE EIGHT TALENTS.

Many sincere and intelligent Christians really believe that Christ indorses and approves of usury in the above-named parables. They are exposed to this delusion, because they have fallen into the prevailing error that the principles of the material legislation of Moses were swept away, as the ceremonial law is conceded to have been, by the coming of Christ. The facts (Luke xix. 11) seem to have been that the disciples were in a state of great excitement, owing to their false idea that he was soon to set up his kingdom by force. There were good reasons now, as there also were after his resurrection (Acts i. 7), why he should not make a full explanation of the real situation to them. He therefore told them the parable of the nobleman who went into a far country,—the analogy between himself and the nobleman being in this respect evident after his ascension,—to receive a kingdom, and to return. Before his departure the nobleman called his ten servants, and said unto them, "Occupy till I come." He continues the parable in such a way as to make it clear that he will expect of his disciples, as the nobleman did of his servants, that they will improve upon the gifts that he imparts to them; but at this point he clears himself of all approval of usury, by bringing out the truth, through the mouth of the wicked servant, that his lord was an austere man, that he took up what he laid not down, he reaped that he did not sow,—*the very characteristics of usury*. Can anything be plainer than that it was the hard and selfish nobleman and not *our Lord*, who approved of usury?

The parable of the eight talents, recorded in Matthew, chapter twenty-five, is of the same general character. It begins really with the thirteenth verse, which calls on all disciples to watch for their absent Lord, an expression which is parallel with the command of the nobleman, to "Occupy till I come," and goes on in precisely the same train of argument; the person who blames the wicked and slothful servant for not putting out his money at usury being the *man* who travelled into a far country, not *our Lord*; the object of the parable being, as in the other case, to incite the followers of Christ to patience and diligence in well-doing, according to the precepts of *their* Master, inasmuch as the servants of worldly men were consistent in carrying out the worldly principles in which they were trained, even though their masters were absent.

There can be no doubt that both parables



illustrated in a vivid manner to Christ's Hebrew followers his aversion to usury, instead of his approval. He had commanded them to "lend, hoping for nothing again;" he had shown by his example, in all the circumstances of his life, that he was absolutely devoid of the mercantile or gainful spirit. How absurd the popular belief, then, which assumes that in these momentous circumstances he abandoned the principles he had taught, and authorized his disciples to follow the world in pecuniary affairs, instead of following him.

#### THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

The argument for the resemblance between Moses and Christ culminates in the history of the Apostolic Church. The risen Saviour was undoubtedly present, as the indwelling power which animated that assembly. The Book of Acts affords unmistakable evidence that although the right of private ownership was respected, yet, as far as was necessary for the full supply of the wants of the needy, "all things were held in common." That this was no transient or local effervescence of the normal tendencies of the Hebrew converts, is evident from Justin Martyn's "Apology for the Christian Faith," dated Anno Domini 150, long after all the books of the New Testament had been written, and had added their weighty confirmation of the claims of Jesus to the possession of "all power both in heaven and upon earth." He says, —

"We, who formerly delighted in adultery, now observe the strictest chastity; we, who used the charms of magic, have devoted ourselves to the true God; and we, who valued money and gain above all things, *now cast what we have in common, and distribute to every man according to his necessities.*"

#### PRESENT POSITION OF THE CHURCH.

Limited hitherto by the course of divine revelation, yet guided by it also, we must now trust somewhat to our own judgment in completing the parallelism between the elder and the later dispensations; in doing this we must cross the centuries which intervene between the Pentecostal scenes, and the adoption of Christianity as the religion of the State by the Roman Emperor Constantine.

The first council of the Church, held at Nice, A. D. 325, affords the chronologic hint which has led me first to conjecture, and afterwards to conclude, that the true nature of the influences which gathered around the church at that time did not rise in their essential character above those which led the Hebrews fifteen centuries before to repudiate the office of the judges, and to substitute therefor a visible earthly monarchy. Three hundred and fifty-six years elapsed after

the entrance to the promised land, before permissiveness was given Samuel to anoint Saul.

The analogy in respect to time is sufficiently obvious to engage the attention, which might be still further fixed by a personal comparison between Saul and Constantine. But these resemblances, although very marked, are of slight importance compared to those which are evident in placing the two periods side by side with each other. It is of course impossible to do this in our present limits. The matter must be briefly committed to the candid thought of the reader, in the statement of our belief, that, as the theocracy of Moses proved too good for the times upon which it fell and the men who were living in them, so the Apostolic Church suffered a similar abatement of its original purity when it passed into the hands of theologians and emperors.

The Protestant reader will assume that the errors of the mediæval period were rectified by the Reformation. To this we can only give a partial and guarded assent. Luther's doctrine of justification by faith did not reinstate the primal gospel. Germany needs a reformation now as much as it did three centuries since. The great reformer failed, in part, because he did not discern the true relation of the material legislation of Moses to the higher aspirations of the soul. Paul preached faith in Christ with success, because he had the advantage of early training in the decalogue and its supplementary forms. All the forces of his Hebrew education enabled him to understand Christ's personal relation to wealth, and his writings are full of expressions which must have contributed powerfully to the purity of the early church in respect to property. It ought also to be remembered, by those who give the Pauline epistles a controlling position, that they are sensibly toned and influenced in their assertion of the supremacy of law by the necessity which was imposed upon their author to defend the liberty of his Gentile converts from the effort to perpetuate the ceremonial obligations.

Luther was under external circumstances somewhat similar to those of Paul. His revolt from the ritualism of the Catholic Church was as vehement as was the apostle's from the ceremonies of the Levitical law. But he lacked that deeply rooted veneration for the decalogue, as the eternal Law of God, which was congenital with Paul. The result was, that he was forced into a position quite reactionary, and altogether unjustifiable. Under his influence the Church has inclined unduly to the exaltation of religion as experience, somewhat to the detriment of religion as righteousness, and to the entire neglect of those scriptural obligations which we are now considering. That we do not bring a baseless charge against the great leader of the Reformation may be seen

by the following recent statement, made without apology, by Dr. J. P. Thompson in "Church and State": "The Christianity of Luther was emancipated not only from the traditions of the church, but also from the older traditions of the rabbis, *and from the law of Moses.*"

#### A GRAVE QUESTION.

We acknowledge here the pressure of a serious inquiry: to what extent did the rejection of Christ by the Jews interfere with his plans of societary reform? The Scriptures guide us to the proper answer, in an allusion at the Last Supper:—

"And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." (Luke xxii. 35, 36.)

It will be recollected, that, when the twelve and the seventy had been sent out to preach social reform, these commands had been laid upon them. They were now reversed, because the swift-approaching crucifixion was soon to remove all possibility of the fulfilment of the secular side of the theocratic kingdom, which alone rendered full obedience to them possible.

The indirect answers, which Christ gave on several occasions to the inquiries of his disciples concerning the immediate appearance of the heavenly kingdom, are also pertinent in answering the question we have raised. He had told them plainly that Jerusalem was to be trodden under foot until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled, showing thus that he was not reserved unless there were sufficient reasons for it; but in the parables of the eight pounds and the ten talents, and again in Acts i. 7, he refused to gratify their curiosity in the larger matter of the coming of the kingdom of God. We apprehend his reason to have been this. He knew that long ages must intervene before the world could reach again the point where the restoration of the theocracy, in the perfected Church, was possible; it would have discouraged his disciples to have told them the truth, it was not necessary for them, and it was wisely withheld.

Six thousand years of the historic period now approximate their close. Chronology points to the seventh thousand as the dawn of the sabbatic era. Converging lines of prophecy on every side warrant the expectation of great changes and great events. It has, perhaps, been well ordered that a veil should have hid from the eyes of the children of God the transcendent and all-pervading nature of the authority which vests in the Christian Church, until the time has arrived when it is imperatively needed. The distress of

man is the opportunity of God. Our sorrows are palpably those of disorder in the material sphere. Of religious and of political liberty, we have more than we can use. Our great need is the extension of law, under gospel sanctions, to the industrial sphere. It is only where law reigns that liberty is enjoyed. A most shocking delusion, in this respect, poisons the mind of the cultured classes. They have mistaken license for freedom. Ignorant of the utter inability of the laboring masses to command equitable price under competition, an inability as marked now as it was in the time of Moses, they mercilessly subject us to the greed of the market. The fearful consequence follows that the channels of distribution are choked at the point where it is of national importance that they should be open,—the ability of the producer to purchase a home, and maintain a family in circumstances of comfort, an ability which depends on the equities of his reward.

We stand now face to face with political and economic conditions, which will probably compel us to place the great industries of the country under legal control; and abolish, or at least qualify, wages, by the admission of the laborer to the right of sharing equitably in the results of his toil. The proposition is hazardous to the last degree. The inertia of society is so marked upon these matters, that it is evident that nothing can be done, except under the pressure of obvious and imminent causes of the most momentous character. As a rule, the natural precedes the spiritual; and, arguing from this, the State must be the first to take action. This rule, however, has been reversed in the introduction of the ballot, which took, unquestionably, its first steps within the Church. On the other hand, it must be conceded that no ruts are so deep as ecclesiastical ones; and most of the great Protestant bodies are committed to theories of the gospel and of modern history, which will require marked qualification before Christ can be received in the plenitude of his being, as the possessor of *all* power, both in heaven and *on earth*. Outside of its beneficent work in the conversion of individuals, which has been somewhat broadened by the founding of foreign missions, the modern Church, as we for the most part see it, confines itself to the sabbath school, and to the peace and temperance reforms. It opposes, it is true, most conscientiously and vehemently the Catholic Church; but, if our view is correct, it has failed to discern that much of this opposition is misdirected, and that it has itself entirely neglected an immense field of human activity. The main force of the gospel is directed against the "world:" but the Church is in full sympathy with the business system of the world, which is the means by which the pride and vain pomp of society is



maintained. It only requires of its members, in their pecuniary affairs, that they be honest; it is utterly blind to the fact that, in halting at this point, it so far lowers the gospel standard as to render any comprehensive application of the Christian principles of faith and hope and love impossible. The Bible thunders its denunciation against Babylon, not Rome; against a great commercial city, not against a religious one. It is not priests, nor soldiers, nor even rumsellers, who deplore the new order which John saw descending out of heaven, but merchants and shipmasters. The Son of God himself passed by every other form of evil during his brief exercise of kingly power, and directed the divine indignation against the traders and money-changers, who defiled the temple.

Over against the astonishing blindness which we have endeavored faithfully, yet kindly, to point out, lies the portentous fact that the State is hastening towards a crisis which she has not in herself the power to avert. Secular law is only strong to detect and punish obvious and offensive crimes, such as murder, robbery by violence, and the like. It cannot follow, expose, and punish the thousand subtle forms of evil which property questions assume. It is impossible to make even honest men comply with laws of this kind, unless they yield a free and voluntary consent to them; and, when they have reached this state, the need of law is scarcely felt. All the force of religious sanctions, both in this life and the next, will be required to resist the exposures which have embodied themselves in Mammon-worship; and these will be inadequate, unless they can be made to work in harmony, through the organic power of the Church, with those deep instincts of our being which lead us to provide for ourselves and our families. It is useless to denounce people for doing what Christ gave them permission to do. In the provision for "purse" and "scrip" and "sword," he gave his followers liberty to conform themselves, as far, and for as long a period as might be needful, to the harsh requirements of natural human society, subject, of course, to such religious obligations as apply to the individual conscience. But the divine conditions of Christian brotherhood have always been latent in the Church, and toward the fulfilment of those tendencies she is now imperatively urged.

The State will not attempt to enter upon these delicate issues, unless upon the verge of anarchy; and she will not succeed, even then, unless sustained by the example and influence of the Church of Christ.

#### THE CHURCH AS THE BASE OF COMMUNITIES.

The generic qualities, which distinguish man from the lower animals, are to be found in his

possession of those exalted capacities which aspire to direct spiritual intercourse with God in the permanence of the social impulse, and in the use of tools and machinery. The full development of our argument would call for the evidence of the authority of Christ over the sex relation, and also for his establishment of the Church as an ecclesiastical court, having jurisdiction over the temporal affairs of its members. No one who is acquainted with the Bible will dispute the statements to this effect, which we have here only room to suggest by Scripture references. That relating to marriage is found in Matt. xix. 4-12; cases of trespass are included in the commands of the Master found in Matt. xviii. 15-18, and recognized by Paul in 1 Cor. vi. 1-3.

These primary qualities of our being, taken in their proper connections of worship, marriage, and labor, form a sufficient base for the expansion of the Christian Church into communities, which shall supplement and finally supersede the State, in its imperfect efforts to harmonize human society by means of civil power. Education would ensue from such conditions as a matter of course. The town of Vineland, N.J., has already established a precedent for the sale of land at cost, which Christian communities of agriculturists would improve on, by holding the larger portion of their domains for the common use of the whole people.

Wherever two or three are gathered in the name of the Master, there he has promised to be, there the theocracy exists in embryo. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, if she understands and faithfully endeavors to use the mighty power committed to her in all its fullness. The Church of to-day has an imposing system of individual evangelizing, but it has hitherto failed to take the first step in organizing its forces for a united assault on the strongholds of Mammon. The divine spirit is withheld, or given fitfully, because, not having been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, God hesitates in committing the true riches to our trust. (Luke xvi. 11.)

#### CONCLUSION.

We dissent, in conclusion, for reasons which have been stated, from the prevailing Protestant theory which "regards the Church as a body spiritual, having no concern with temporalities." The practical effect of this view has been that one-half of Christ's glad tidings has not been preached in modern times. The actual application of the gospel to human affairs has been left to individual effort, or sought through natural civil government. The Bible has little to say in praise of natural men, and it has still less of eulogy for their united work as developed in the State. The stream cannot rise higher than the



source. When the low origin of the State, as compared with the Church, is clearly seen, there will be less moralizing about the corruption of politics, and much more of self-sacrificing action in the Church.

Toward whom, or in what portion of the Church, shall the homeless poor look for succor? During the last century a science — falsely so called — of public economy, based on selfishness, has thrust itself upon the Christian world, and has arrogantly demanded that the law of the market shall set aside the law of God. The leading preachers of Protestant Christendom, represented by such men as Wesley, Chalmers, and Channing, have offered — in opposition to the views of the economists — a sturdy but ineffectual defence of the principles of moral rectitude, and the sentiments of natural and Christian brotherhood. The failure of these efforts has been due in part to the great disadvantage under which those preachers labored in claiming authority over temporal affairs, in direct opposition to the avowed doctrine of the Reformation, while disregarding the communal element of the Church, thus limiting their influence to the conscience of the individual. Another cause of failure is to be found in the lack of practical ability in the pulpit to apply the principles of equity to the affairs of life. The office of the preacher, so far as it touches the money or the labor questions, is confined to their spiritual aspects. He represents the high priest and the prophet of the elder dispensation. The study of the Hebrew economy, as developed by Prof. E. C. Wines, in his "Commentary on the Laws of the Ancient Hebrews," has led me to notice the commanding position which the tribe of Levi occupied. It was devoted to the material aspects of religion. All that is implied or hoped for in the solution of the great question involved in this discussion, the righteous adjustment of the relations of labor and capital, fell naturally in the ancient Church under their control, and just as naturally, we conceive, passes, by legitimate descent, into the hands of their successors in the Christian Church.

With these convictions we turn with interest to the inspired record of the material function of the Apostolic Church, as officially embodied. This is to be found in the first six verses of the sixth chapter of Acts. Seven men, of whom the martyr Stephen, a man full of the Holy Ghost, was the leader, were set apart by popular choice, and ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands, to administer the material affairs of the Church. The dignified membership, and the impressive ceremonial by which the deaconate was instituted, proves its elevated character, and ought to aid effectively in redeeming the office

from its present dwarfed and petty condition. Did any one ever hear of a convention, or conference, of deacons or stewards? Every other interest of the church, from bishops to local preachers, comes statedly together to consult concerning the efficient carrying on of the Lord's work. Why not organize the material function of the church, so that in its varied forms of trustees, stewards, deacons, and missionary and prudential committees, wise and brotherly plans could be matured for "making friends of the mammon of unrighteousness"? As an indication of the field which lies open for their action, we condense three practical propositions of the Boston Christian Labor Union, the first of which calls upon the churches to adopt the features of the benefit-societies; the second proposes labor-partnership between Christians as a substitute for wages; and the third recommends united action to sustain those dealers who adopt the cost system.

We respectfully suggest to the active and efficient business men, who are interested in the material and spiritual prosperity of the churches, that a series of measures might be happily and harmoniously instituted under the first of the above propositions, which would bring some natural elements of great power under subordination to spiritual law, thus sensibly aiding the gospel, and preparing the way for the future application of the second and third propositions. The experience of the beneficial societies has demonstrated that large numbers of the people can be relied on to contribute from five to twelve dollars a year, for mutual aid in the material exposures of life. We are the subjects of the ridicule of the world, because of our inefficiency in this respect, and we are rapidly losing our hold upon the working-classes; for it must not be forgotten that the same cause — the poverty of the people — which crowds the cities, also empties the churches. We suggest still further, that a system might be established by which the burden of usury, which presses so heavily on many churches, might be relieved by the loan of moderate amounts of money from their own members without price, the consideration coming in the form of a liberal burial-fee, aid in sickness, old age, etc.

Will the preachers, into whose hands this pamphlet may come, aid the thoughtful and prayerful consideration of its contents, by loaning it to "the most worthy" of their membership, with such recommendation as they may think it deserves. Candid inquiry and conference in the spirit of Christ is solicited upon the subjects herein discussed. Editors will confer a favor by forwarding any notice which they may make.

## GAIN OR GODLINESS.

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ST. PAUL reproves those who assume that gain is consistent with godliness, and exhorts Timothy to withdraw himself from such. An interesting question arises here, viz., What is gain? In the Old Testament it is called "increase," and is sternly prohibited among the people of God. As there defined, it means the taking of more labor or merchandise than is given. The desire for it is an unhallowed impulse of our being; and that desire, in its relation to our material affairs, corresponds with that of lust in the social sphere. The Christian church opposes one as a deadly enemy to purity and peace. The other is not only unrestrained, but receives the highest honor.

Dense ignorance as well as blurred spiritual vision obscures our perceptions in this respect. To the unreasoning worldling and the thoughtful professing Christian alike, the hoarded millions of the capitalist, which are in the nature of the case almost wholly the result of "gain," have the same sanctity that pertains to the little of a righteous man, obtained by serviceable labor. God looks upon them in no such light.

The scripturally righteous man acquires his possessions by labor of brain or hand put forth, *according to the laws of God*, for the direct production of wealth. Now, the great majority of producers are shut out by the conditions of wage remuneration from any accumulation by mercantile "increase." All the vast surpluses which they manually create, over and above a meagre living for themselves, are flowing through the wide and deep channels of gain which an ungodly system of exchange has prepared for them, and in the shape of interest, profit, dividends, and rent, are enriching the few at the expense of the many.

"The faith once delivered to the saints," both in its Hebrew and its apostolic forms, was an organized protest against selfishness in material affairs. The opening utterance of the first recorded sermon of Christ, "He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor" (Luke iv. 18), finds no fulfilment in the present relation of the church to the people. The poor of Palestine were moved by the full gospel which Jesus preached as they were never moved before, and as a people will never be moved again until that preaching is repeated. They knew that in fulfilling "the Law," Jesus designed to provide for their material as well as their spiritual needs. In its narrow individualism, and in its disregard of the material exposures of the poor, the church is losing the respect and love of large numbers of the common people,—the very classes who heard Christ gladly.

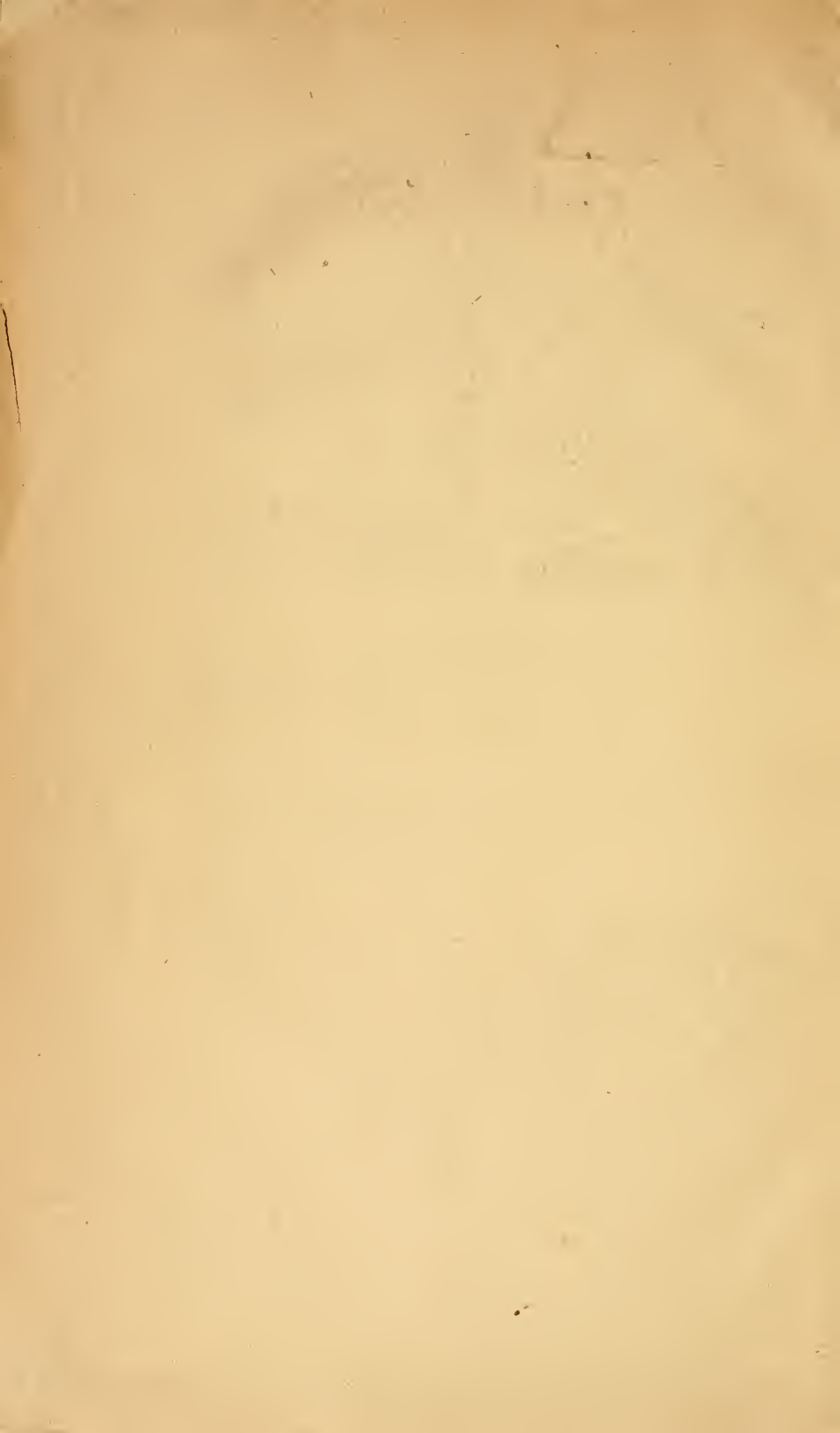
We put the question with all respect, yet with an earnestness and solemnity which we believe is fully warranted by the signs of the times: Why is the pulpit and the religious press to such a large extent silent on these great practical themes which animated and inspired Moses and the prophets, and which it is evident Paul and the other apostles held and practised as vital portions of the gospel? Why are the youth of our sabbath schools left in ignorance of the revealed principles of equity, of service, and of sacrifice in the conduct of business; and of the use of money in their personal and their religious relations? What would Ezekiel say if a modern sabbath-school question-book was placed in his hands, and he should search its pages to ascertain how Christians had fulfilled the Law in this respect? or, still further, if he could enter our various conferences and conventions, and, above all, the gatherings to promote Christian holiness, and should find every other shortcoming that men are guilty of rebuked, but scarcely a word against the sin of covetousness, or the desire to obtain possession by "gain" of more than one could possibly earn in any scriptural way?

One of our great railroads has lately made a semi-annual dividend of four and a half per cent. In order to make this payment, its employees are treated in the following manner: A steady and reliable man, who has been in the company's employ for years at two dollars a day, with the liberty to increase it by extra work, has had his wages reduced, first to \$1.75, and then to \$1.50, and his services demanded for extra work without increased pay. He has had sickness and death in his family, and in consequence is in debt. He is disheartened and discouraged. If he should fall into drinking habits, the Christian men and women who are living on the "gain" of that road, through their dividends, will deplore the fatal tendencies of working people to drunkenness, and declare with renewed and pious zeal that intemperance is the great sin of laboring men, when those same pious persons are largely the cause of that sin. But Jesus sought to remove the causes of such "fatal tendencies." He aimed for righteousness, knowing that when righteousness was secured there would be no intemperance. Now, righteousness in the daily life and in practical affairs was the ideal of the Hebrews, as beauty was that of the Greeks, and courage that of the Romans. Jesus aimed to perfect this ideal, and bring about its realization; and the triumph of his gospel depends upon the full obedience of his disciples to his commands concerning wealth.









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